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Viets Link Spies, Americans



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South Vietnamese commando shows prowess with knife.

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SAIGON, March 21—Saigon police officials claimed Saturday that they have destroyed a Communist spy ring whose members met often with unnamed Americans, including U.S. officials here and "anti-war congressmen."

The police gave no details of the alleged American connection with the ring, and the U.S. Embassy spokesman said "there isn't enough to go on" in the police statement for the Americans to make any comment.

Police said the spy ring operated out of a government-owned villa in Saigon that is reserved for Gen. Nguyen Chang Thi. Thi was forced out of Vietnam in 1966 by then-premier Nguyen Cao Ky, and he now lives in Washington. But the regime has kept a house for him here as it does for virtually all generals.

The ring used this villa, police said Saturday, and it was run by a Vietcong agent whom Thi had known during a previous period of exile from Vietnam in 1960-63. But police said as far as they could determine, Thi was only "exploited" by the ring, and was not a part of it.

Much of the police press conference was devoted to the recent arrests of 40 Saigon University students. The arrests have provoked a series of student protests, including a three-day boycott of classes scheduled to begin Monday morning.

The chairman of the Saigon University student union and a number of other student leaders are among those arrested. Police claimed today they were members of a Communist cell, but offered no

physical evidence of their connections with the enemy.

Saigon University students have been a target of Vietnamese governments for some years. Many former student leaders are now in jail or with the Vietcong. Students in trouble with the government are a normal phenomenon of wartime life in Saigon. Many Vietnamese expect the young people to be at odds with the regime, whether they are really connected with the Vietcong or not.

Police claimed that there were two cells of Vietcong at Saigon University, and that the Communist apparatus there was run partly by young people sent to Saigon for the purpose by the Communists' provisional revolutionary government.